



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Safe Places To Warm-Up During Severe Weather**

Waukesha, Wis. – During bouts of dangerously cold weather, the homeless, households experiencing heat loss, stranded motorists and individuals burdened with other emergency situations can take comfort in Waukesha County's severe weather planning efforts.

By partnering with various social service agencies, like that of homeless shelters, the Greater Milwaukee Chapter of the American Red Cross – Waukesha Regional Office and law enforcement agencies, Waukesha County has created a network of providers to minimize potentially life threatening weather-related circumstances in the community.

"It is important to have a system in place to help protect people from serious weather conditions," said County Executive Dan Finley. "By working together with a

variety of human service organizations and law enforcement agencies to minimize the risk factors associated with severely cold Wisconsin winters, we are able to provide our residents, and their loved ones that are traveling in the area, with a safe place to warm-up when they need it.”

When faced with severe weather emergencies, individuals and families in need of assistance should contact 2-1-1/First Call For Help, a 24-hour information and referral hotline coordinated by the Mental Health Association in Waukesha County. By dialing 2-1-1 or (262) 547-3388 on a local telephone or cellular phone, callers will be connected to referral specialists who will be able to give them information regarding emergency shelters and other agencies providing assistance.

To ensure that people receive the help they need, bed space in area shelters will be monitored continually. If local facilities exceed current capacity, the American Red Cross will assist with opening and managing pre-designated church-based shelters.

For more information on Waukesha County’s Severe Weather Plan, please call Emergency Management Coordinator Jim Malueg at (262) 548-7580. For emergency shelter needs, call 2-1-1 or (262) 547-3388.

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